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The many-sided Lincoln - what would he do if he were here today?

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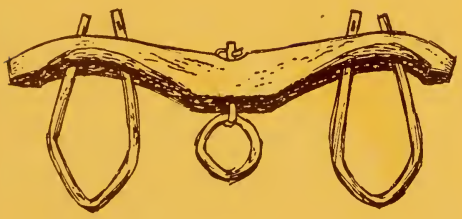

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THE MANY-SIDED LINCOLN

What Would He Do Were He Here Today?

By

EMANUEL HERTZ

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT WASHINGTON HEIGHTS CONGREGATION
FEBRUARY 12, 1926

An edition of 1000 copies of this address has been printed of which this copy is No.

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THE MANY-SIDED LINCOLN — WHAT WOULD HE DO WERE HE HERE TODAY?

By EMANUEL HERTZ

(An address delivered in honor of the memory of Abraham Lincoln at the Annual Services of the Forum of Washington Heights Congregation in the City of New York on February 12, 1926.)

THE whimsical caricaturist who draws an array of studies of possible portraits of Abraham Lincoln by Murillo, Van Dyke, Velasquez, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Hals, Whistler, Millet and Rembrandt, each one after the manner of his age and after the mode then prevalent in his country—if these masters had indeed painted Lincoln—has but exemplified what is happening to the great War President at the hands of novelist-historians, and biographer-poets. They summon up before our gaze an Abraham Lincoln who never lived and who, had he read some of these effusions, would have been puzzled as to who was really the subject of these biographical phantasmagorias. On the theory of producing something new, we have these later-day biographers rhapsodize about Lincoln's extremely prosaic childhood and reenact an Iliad of woe through which he forged his weary way, and this array of authors has drawn out the history of his family for seven generations with a meticulous minuteness rarely lavished upon the scion of an imperial family—while Lincoln himself spoke of his family's life story as "The short and simple annals of the poor." But the spirit of piling Ossa on Pelion will not down and by sheer force of volume of research Lincoln is forced into a heraldic Almanac de Gotha of his own. But this wise man of the Civil War era has left an effective antidote to all such futile effort—to make him appear other than he really was. He wrote and he spoke his philosophy of life, his ideals and theory of government, his ideas of right and wrong, his views of the duty of the citizen to his country, and the relationships of man to man, of employer to employee, of commander to common soldier, of President to his Cabinet, to his Congress, to his War Governors, he wrote these thoughts and reflections and duties and rights into his addresses, into his messages and into his lectures and into his letters. Examine an index to his collected works—to those which have appeared in print, and you will see lucid expressions of opinion on a multiplicity of subjects. Read the speech or the letter or the message covering any particular subject, and you will find a gem—a nugget of pure gold direct from the heart of

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Abraham Lincoln. And but for the lamentable lack of study of those precious works, we have seen grow up in the minds of many, a cadaverous-looking charcoal sketch of the great American—with one or two fables or events tacked on to the caricature of what was as noble an apparition when seen in all its remarkable manifestations as is the impression made upon our minds by the undimmed splendors of the rising sun. Close upon those romancers who persist in having the babbling brook, the song of the birds, the whistling of the wind, the glimmer of moonlight on the waves of the rivulet as indispensable parts of the landscape traversed by the youthful Lincoln, are those who profess to find that he has excelled in one, and in only one field of endeavor. These now profess and proceed to demonstrate that this or that particular specialty in which Lincoln excelled, enabled him in after life to solve the problems which he was called upon to cope with. The ignorance and arrogance of this class of biographers and romancers has actually diverted the gaze of the multitude from the real character of Lincoln. The reverend homage paid to the printed word simply because it is printed, simply helps along these multitudes of inventions. Every season brings its five-foot bookshelf of Lincoln books and addresses, and they all look distressingly alike in workmanship.

Why not, in justice to him and all those who ought to know him as he was, go back to the source, the only source of all our reliable information? Why not call upon all who know or have a letter or document which would shed any light on Lincoln, to produce and publish it? Let us study Abraham Lincoln as he was. Let us hold him up to our children in his real habiliments of body and of mind? Let us start with the young Lincoln in the Illinois Assembly; let us follow him through five years of legislative life at his desk in the legislature—*the desk which is even now looking for a permanent resting place.* Let us read the letters, the speeches and the Lyceum addresses of that period. Let us follow him as he studied law from the moment he found a copy of Blackstone at the bottom of the old barrel. Let us follow him as he practiced law for many years and come to know Lincoln the lawyer. Oh, what a wonderful tale—truthful to the letter, can be told about this young champion of deserving causes—this champion of the widow and guardian angel of the orphan—this great and good man who strove for justice, with truth—truth, the seal of God—as his lodestone. He would right a wrong, he would struggle for an unfortunate client—always provided that he was convinced of his honesty and of the justice of his cause. He could not last as the advocate of evil. He withdrew and cleansed himself of the contact with evil. He became the jury lawyer of his day in the State of Illinois. And yet no man ever lived who would have made a better Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. President Taft—who picked and appointed more Judges than any other

President save only Washington—is authority for this claim, and Senator Beveridge in his immortal life of the great Chief Justice pictures Lincoln as an almost indistinguishable colleague and companion of one for the other. But all of this does not demonstrate that Lincoln was a great lawyer only—a lawyer to the exclusion of all else. It was one of the many occupations thrust upon him by a Divine Providence, preparing him for the greater tasks, for the more exacting ordeals, yet to come. We find another student of the great Commoner studying Lincoln's political activities from his appearance on the platform during his first candidacy for office down to his re-election for the Presidency in 1864. He will examine the newspapers of a quarter of a century in a score of States in order to demonstrate that it was not Lincoln the lawyer, but Lincoln the political leader or statesman who really made the great impression on his times.

An old veteran of the Civil War attempts to demonstrate that the great joint debate was really the climax of his career and he digests the opinions of his contemporaries and of contemporary journals to show that his thesis is the only one that fits the great debater, the great tribune of the common people.

There are others who were slow to recognize his great worth and who began to see him and know him under the great storm and stress of the Civil War—in that beleagured city—Washington. His dealings with a refractory Congress, his troubles with Northern States, loyal, but slow in responding to the call of the Union. His countering the assaults of the disloyal in his own ranks, his warding off blows for misguided friends, his course of education of an entire country—that the Union must be preserved—presented an entirely new theory to the historian of the Civil War. He discovered a figure towering over and above all others around him—a sublime figure under every phase of the cataclysm—a figure heroic, sublime, majestic, holding to the steering wheel of the Union and steering for safety, to victory. This man is reaching the conclusion Seward reached—"We must revise our opinion of this man." We knew him not. We have a great War President—uncanny in his knowledge and ability to cope with so many distracting problems at the same time—there is something superhuman about it all. Stanton, the imperious, is subdued; Seward, the all-wise is awed; Wells, the faithful is beginning to see a great light. Senators, congressmen, governors, generals unwilling but inevitably, are drawn by the giant magnet of common sense, of thoroughness of human sympathy—all are drawn on for help, for guidance, for information, for re-heartening, for strength, for faith in the ultimate victory of the Union under its great pilot. Hence the evolution of Lincoln, the statesman, the great War President, the master of men. (What a misnomer to be applied to that humble burden bearer.)

The leaders of religion are now turning their gaze upon the lonely spokesman of the Union—who speaks in the language of the Prophets, who seems to have sprung from between the pages of the Bible—for does he not use Bible phrases, parables, nuggets of wisdom like the Lawgiver of old? Did he not see the Union on fire but not destroyed—the bush burning but not destroyed by the fire? Did he not hear the call from amid the flames of the embers which made up the toppling Union—"Go and save the Union?" And did he not answer joyfully, anxiously: "Here am I?" Preacher and teacher, priest and religious leader recognize a kinship between his President and his Prophets and his saints and his martyrs, those who made up the list of those who strove to make man free and independent and enlightened. They begin to recognize a kinship to Abraham, to Moses, to Paul, to Savonarola (what a striking likeness of emaciated profile), to Wyclif, to Cromwell, to Calvin, to William the Silent, whose taking off the little children bewailed as did an entire grief-stricken country bewail the untimely death of his modern replica; and when he was consigned as belonging to the ages—every teacher and preacher of God's Word paid his share in a universal requiem rendered to the martyred hero of the epic called America.

The stylist and scholar, the student of language who is freer from charlatanism than most people, begins to study the text. He reads Lincoln's addresses, his messages and his letters. He asks himself where did this man derive his pure English style? How is it that he is so free from the baneful style of political speaker and writer? How brief, how simple, how pure, how clear his thought and his style and his mode of expression? He now tries to find a prototype and he goes far back to ancient Greece and finds in Pericles the only man to whose oration he can compare this novel style and Aesop, the only one whose tales resemble Honest Abe's. Few spirits have spoken thus—two or three in all the intervening ages. This man is a great exemplar of English prose style; but hold, some of it reads like blank verse. What a wonderful man is this who in the short space of time mastered the English language within which to clothe these undying ideas and ideals. The literary critic now reads his letters and begins to understand why the newspapermen of his day —and there were giants in that profession in those days, demanded letters from Lincoln on all the many questions and problems of the day—because all read them, all quoted them. He hardly opened his lips but he said something which will not die. Was there ever such another letter-writer? Letters in which sentiments ran the gamut of all the emotions of a bleeding, embattled nation struggling through the darkness to light, through rebellion and treason to victory and union. The Epistles of Lincoln—what an alluring title to some new novelist-historian of a great national hero and martyr!

And now come the mothers, the heartbroken mothers, the grief-stricken mothers, the tear-blinded mothers, the pale, emaciated, half-crazed mothers, they came to Lincoln, to Mr. Lincoln, to the President—tired, sleepless, exhausted, red-lidded, hollow cheeked, the burden-bearer of humanity, literally dropping under his great burden and faces these mothers, and hears their heartbreaking appeals of impending executions of their boys—the victims of army discipline through the ages—and Father Abraham, but lately bereft of his own child—melts in sympathy as he hears these heartbroken mothers of the Union plead for their offspring, and he pardons and he pardons and he pardons until we behold in him the Angel of Mercy at the throne of the Most High pleading for pardon for all. He pardons, while the generals threaten to resign, while Stanton growls over the undermined morale of the army and over shattered discipline. "Stanton, is not this boy of more use to the Union on earth than under earth?"—and so we behold the sublime outline of Lincoln, the Pardoner—eclipsing that of the lawyer, of the politician, of the debater, of the legislator, of the statesman, of the executive, of the stylist, of the letterwriter, and for a moment we behold in juxtaposition the two great solemn pictures—Lincoln the Comforter of the mother of the pardoned boy, and Napoleon standing rigid over the sleeping sentinel who awakes and beholds his emperor on guard—and his irrevocable doom pictured in the inexorable features of his emperor! Choose the picture which appeals more to the universal human heart.

And so, step by step, we find the pardoner of the young soldier become the pardoner of the entire South—a friend of Jefferson Davis, and of Lee, and of Stephens, whenever they are ready to utter the word—"Union". And then his task is done—the task for which he lingered an entire lifetime—the task for which he prepared in the country store, in the post office, in the legislature, in the surveyor's office, in the courts, on the hustings, in Congress, in the debate with Douglas, in Cooper Union—the task of grasping the wheel of the Ship of State surrounded by rocks, by wreckers, by lightning—steering clear through the Scylla of secession and the Charybdis of disloyalty in the North—this task done—completely done, and he was no more, for like Enoch, God took him. This many-sided messenger of God sent to right the wrongs of a race—held in subjugation, in defiance of all that was right and of all that was just—indefiance of a higher law that was becoming dominant in the land, although it required a repetition of the ancient plague—that all the first-born of the oppressors would have to be slain before the children of bondage would be let go.

Let us all repair to the great quarry, his recorded words, his preachments, his maxims, and let us complete the great structure, let us gather from all the corners of the globe his written words and complete the

task so well begun. Let us classify all he said and all he preached—and what will result? We will erect a structure to which all the people of the earth can come for guidance and inspiration. Would a political leader seek light and leading let him study the political utterances of our many-sided Lincoln. Would an executive not merely ask himself perfunctorily, "What would Lincoln do today?" let him read and have his answer. Would you have patent for loyalty and patriotism let him read Lincoln who declared that he would be the last man to defy the enemies of his country when all others had given up. Would you desire to find a method of exposing a false prophet of a wicked cause—study his joint debate with Douglas. Would you know how to immortalize those who gave up their lives that the Union might live, go with me to Gettysburg—and in solemn silence meditate what he there spoke for eternity. Would you know how to cleanse the Augean stables of a putrid and treasonable administration—see what he did when he displaced the infirm and petulant Buchanan, on the point of surrendering all to the enemies of his country. Would you learn how to manage an administration open to assault from without and from within with those closest to you trying to embroil you in universal war—see what Lincoln did from the moment he came to Washington through the long and weary years of the nerve-wrecking and heart-breaking war.

Lincoln, the Diplomat! How they would have smiled had someone called him that ten years earlier—divined what the rascally Napoleon was doing with the agents of the Confederacy—Lincoln, the diplomat solved and disposed of the Trent Affair and confounded the conspiracy of Gladstone, Palmerston and Russell to recognize the Confederacy by timing the issuing of his Emancipation Proclamation, not to please Wendell Phillips or Beecher or Greeley, but in time to prevent action by an English Cabinet called for the purpose of recognizing the Confederacy—he made it clear that taking such action would place Christian England in the position of the advocate and champion of the whipping post, of the auction block and of the Moloch of slavery. Diplomat, indeed, was Lincoln, who picked Dayton for Paris and Sanford at Brussels, who gathered all the munitions available on the Continent and Adams for England in time to tell his lordship that releasing the Alabama was war! And on the 117th Anniversary of his birth, Sir Frederick Maurice, one who judged the military events of the Great War with knowledge and keen discernment, finds a great military authority in our great War President who learned the great lesson of War and of warfare in an amazingly short time and from a military standpoint he knew more and understood more than all his civil and military advisors, one who followed understandingly every great battle from Chancellorsville and Antietam through Gettysburg and Vicksburg, down to Appomattox. Lincoln knew the war map better than his generals and had his

advice been followed on a number of occasions, the war would have been shortened by years.

But in no capacity does he appear to greater advantage than he does in the White House—the mecca for every human being, either singly or in droves, seeking advice, having a request, an idea, a petition, or a message. What a motley number they were—foreign ministers, war correspondents, governors, Southern sympathizers, generals, soldiers, preachers, teachers, journalists, financiers, the entire army personnel, cabinet officers, senators, political leaders—all came early and often to advise, cajole, petition, harass and annoy the man of many sorrows, the man of many pardons, who was trying in spite of them all, to do the work he was called upon to perform. All of these came and saw and heard for themselves what this many-sided man said and did and accomplished. A great many of these have in one form or another recorded their impressions of the man, recorded their recollections of how he acquitted himself under the most trying ordeals and all seem to agree that this was no ordinary man. This man, who saw all, who heard all, who endured slander and abuse such as has never been levelled against any one human being—and finally convinced even those of their iniquity —this man who was never found wanting, who was never unprepared— this was indeed no ordinary man.

And we, the heirs of this great soul, we should dedicate ourselves to the task of rescuing Abraham Lincoln from the hands of his detractors. We, the citizens of the land he died to preserve, owe it to his memory to gather lovingly all the shreds and all the words, all the sayings and all the precepts that fell from his lips wherever recorded and preserved and demand in the name of justice, in the name of fairness, that all the documents, letters, legal papers, inscriptions, passes, comments and speeches in existence anywhere, everywhere, be produced for publication to the end that we might reproduce the dead leader to our people in all his many-sided endowments with all the multitude of kindnesses, of virtues he displayed, as engraved in the missives which came from his heart to every other wounded heart, to every sorrowing mother, to every war-weary patriot—who asked for and received the treasured words of consolation written in that beautiful script by the hand that was guided by the great immortal soul in the White House.

And now what would this many-sided Lincoln have done with the problems of the day? is a question which every now and then one of our Lincoln Day orators, one of our statesmen in responsible positions asks. An answer to that question has been attempted a great many times but very few answers have been given in the light of Lincoln's performances. The sad and distressing phase about the whole thing seems to be that

all those who ask the question, not unlike his biographers, studiously refrain from reading Lincoln's speeches and letters. They refrain from studying his political acts and performances. In the light of these we can truthfully state that Lincoln certainly would not divide his followers into patricians and plebeians. Lincoln certainly would not have divided the voters of this country into a fighting organization and into an office-holding organization. The man who would fight the battles of the Republic; the man who would preach Lincoln's doctrine would not be disqualified by his preachment from carrying out Lincoln's policies in office.

A political leader with Abraham Lincoln was a man to be considered and consulted—Read the letters to Thurlow Weed, to Senator Cameron, to Lyman Trumbull, to Hannibal Hamlin and to a host of others. And it goes without saying that the political party today which practices that sane and practical political principle of Abraham Lincoln's, of having the preachers of political policy become the performers in office, that party succeeds and continues to succeed; but the party which has one portion do the work of electing and then is made to make way for people unheard of until after election, and who by some necromancy convince or bedevil the appointing power that they, and not the workers, should fill the offices; the party which practices this false political principle fails at succeeding elections and continues to go down to defeat until it ceases to be a factor; for it does not deserve to live.

And when the political leader nowadays asks: "What would Lincoln do if he were here today?" we can tell him that Lincoln would do just that—reward the deserving political worker with political preferment after he had participated and made possible the victory of the party.

Different panaceas for eliminating corruption in high places received but scant consideration from that direct political descendant of old Samuel Adams who said: "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." And if Lincoln could busy himself with politics every day of the year he could see no reason why others should not do the same thing. Lincoln believed in a trained political party—lieutenants who would not only appreciate the principles the party stood for, but who were trained and prepared to carry out those party principles in such a manner as would result in strengthening the Union. Political volunteers to him were as good and as bad as volunteers in the army who came for thirty or sixty days and whose one thought during their period of volunteering was the anxiety to return home. It was only after the army was drilled and trained and made permanent that victories were made possible.

And if Lincoln were here today he would preach and practice that only trained political leaders are worth anything in our body politic and that the volunteers of a week or ten days before election, for the purpose

of filling the office, if successful, would make no impression upon that master politician today any more than they would have in his own time.

The questioner as to what Lincoln would do on different occasions might well be answered by referring him to what Lincoln said and did. His tariff policy was clear and made clear by the tersest and clearest statement—which once more shows the cloudless lucidity of his mind. What would Lincoln have done about National Defence and National participation in international affairs? The answer to the first question when tested by his actual words and deeds can be found in the fact that he organized the greatest army and navy any country ever had up to his day. And the other question, which so many have attempted to answer for him, can easily be answered by anyone who knows what a firm believer Lincoln was in the Declaration of Independence, in the policies of Washington and Jefferson and Marshall as to the duties and as to the functions of our country among the nations of the world; and it is little less than sacrilege for anyone to say that Lincoln would have advocated entry of our country into the League of Nations and thus become subordinated and lost in the Babel of voices and vortex of selfish passions which dominate and rule that incongruous institution. Lincoln knew well what the Christian statesmen of England were attempting to do with the help of the diplomats of France and the other countries on the Continent. Gladstone and Palmerston and Russell and the vast majority of the English and French intelligencia were ready to gloat over the destruction of the Union, and came within a hair's breadth of realizing their ardent hopes and ambitions. For anyone to say that Father Abraham would have consented to have his country, his United States, have one voice among fifty-two others, one voice against fifty-two others in a league which is represented by an overwhelming majority of peoples—primitive, selfish, under-educated and unprincipled and unscrupulous in their diplomacy—for any man to imagine that Abraham Lincoln would have ever exposed the country for which he fought and died to the ipse dixit of an institution of this kind, sprung into being in the last moments of the expiring Versailles Conference which met in a spirit of revenge, which acted in the spirit of a conqueror over the vanquished, which tried to extract from a conquered foe the penalties of wars and of differences of centuries, has not read and has not understood the words of Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln, with his immeasurable sympathy, never believed in the principle of voi victis—woe to the conquered—and it was from that atmosphere that the League of Nations sprang. That alone would have made it impossible for a man of the mighty toleration, of the great love, of the great heart of Abraham Lincoln, to participate in any such conference or become a member of the offspring of such a conference.

To anyone who has read his letters and his addresses on reconstruction of the conquered South, to anyone who knows that he had nothing but the hand of fellowship for Lee, for Jefferson Davis, for Benjamin and for Johnson, if they but subscribed to the oath of fealty, it is unthinkable to believe that Lincoln would have become a partner in the bloody military cabals of the Balkan States and their European co-conspirators among the greater powers who control them.

If Lincoln were alive today and in a position of power, he would prevent the contamination of the United States by union with people who thrive on war, who believe in war, who prepare for war, who pray for war and whose business is war. "Let us beware of military glory," said Lincoln. "It is a rainbow made of drops of blood. Like the fascination of the serpent, it charms only to destroy." He would not have permitted the Union of his country with people who do not believe in religious toleration and in the equality of man, Lincoln, this bewilderingly original genius, had a peculiar method of minding his own affairs and of having the United States mind its own affairs; he would have actually advocated the principle of educating America first and enlightening America first, of saving America first, and of making the people of America respected by being tolerant to the stranger in their midst, before he would move to participate in the business of any other country or any other nation. He would have been adamant on the question of the Monroe Doctrine and would not have thrown it into the ever-boiling cauldron of European politics. This statesman of the masses would have been a mighty helper in the struggle between capital and labor; he would have been a tower of strength for the oppressed of every nationality. He would have laughed out of existence secret organizations as inimical to our form of government, and would have led them all into the temple of the Union where all are equal, where all have equal opportunity, and he would have pointed to himself as he often did when he said: "I happen temporarily to occupy the White House. I am a living witness that any one of your children may look to come here as my father's child has."—and it might have been his life's work had he been spared from the bullet of the assassin to give every child of this broad land just that opportunity. He would not have made a mockery of the majesty of the law by enforcing one law and neglecting others. He would have continued to act with malice towards none and charity to all. Justice, justice shalt thou pursue —would have been Lincoln's policy. Not one-sided justice—not justice directed at one single commandment—enforce all the laws impartially and do not prefer one to the other—for you would then be partial to one class of criminal, more lenient with one than with the other—a policy which ultimately leads to injustice. Practice justice for the sake of justice, and not because of popular acclaim—"Let us have faith that right makes might and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it."

If Lincoln were here today he would not require the consent of an ecumenical conference to give him permission to criticize an unfair law, or a law unfairly enacted. He did not hesitate to criticize the Dred Scott decision in the most rigorous way—he went further; he charged an understanding between the dramatic personae, in no unmistakable manner—see how he flays Taney and Douglas, Pierce and Buchanan. "We cannot absolutely know that these exact adaptations are the result of pre-concert, but when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places, and by different workmen—Stephen, Franklin, Roger and James, for instance; and when we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortices exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places, and not a piece too many or too few,—not omitting even the scaffolding—or if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared to yet bring such pieces in—in such a case we feel it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin, and Roger and James, all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn before the first blow was struck." If for no other reason, his presence in these days would have been a dispensation, for he would have demonstrated the fallacy which has become a great shibboleth of good citizenship—that a bad law, known to be bad, must be enforced ad nauseam in order to educate a community for its repeal. He did not belong to the class who said: "My country, right or wrong—nevertheless my country." He said: "My country must ever be right, and when wrong must acknowledge that it is wrong and must be set right."—as he did with the Trent Affair, when the entire North fairly howled approval of the Captain's conduct when he seized the Southern commissioners. We cannot imagine Lincoln standing by and knowing that an idea or an enactment or a bill or a law was wrong—and stand idly by and be cowed into worshipping that law. And yet no human being ever breathed who had a greater respect for law. We all know his stand on immigration, how he had not the heart to do aught which would prevent anyone, who fled from persecution or who came here to better his lot, from coming here. He knew nothing of Nordic or South European—all he knew was that one God made us all. Now, some of us have discovered what he said, and how farseeing his immigration policy was may be seen from the united North which fought the Civil War and then the Great War in our own day—the roar of cannon knows no distinction between Hollander, English, French or German descendants of our early immigrants! Some of us still recall the inspired war cartoon showing the fusion of all nationalities in the defense of our country—the young men with those unpronounceable names who fought

so nobly and so well. Would he look with favor upon an alien registration law? He certainly would not; he would write another letter to Speed, which would read as follows:

". . . Our progress in degeneracy appears to be pretty rapid. As a Nation we began by declaring that 'All men are created free and equal.' We now practically read it: 'All men are created equal, except negroes.' When Know-nothings get control—'All men are created equal except negroes, foreigners and Catholics!' When it comes to this, I shall prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretence of loving liberty—to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without even the base alloy of hypocrisy."

He would have stamped out religious persecution in every shape as he stamped out sedition and secession. He pleaded for peaceful solution of the overwhelming problem which confronted him—and Lincoln's difficulties at that time have never been adequately portrayed—and when that failed, and when the blind Southern leaders, bent on secession, became the aggressors, he firmly and unflaggingly saw the War to a successful end. Nor was he diverted from his purpose by other entanglements. "One war at a time," was his slogan; but he was prepared for the next problem the moment the War was over. He would have ended the cowardly attack of sects levelled against their neighbors simply because of religious differences or because of the differences in time of their arrival on these shores. He would have spoken directly and clearly as he did when he delivered his "House divided" speech in spite of the advice of his entire party of advisors and managers who wailed that defeat was certain should he utter those fatal words—which he did utter —and which were heard by an aroused people from coast to coast. His living words about our attitude towards negroes and Catholics just quoted are ample proof of this claim as to what he would have done were he in office today on the underlying problem of toleration.

He would have been for arbitration, universal in its application; not arbitration with loaded dice; arbitration such as would insure not only all people of the earth an honest verdict, but which would protect the United States from envious and rapacious claims and plots and schemes of the war-impoverished peoples of the world, whose sole aim in life seems to be the unloading of all the troubles of the world upon our heads. He would have seen that; he would have understood that; and he, with his amazing personality would have accomplished what seems to be so hard for us to understand and cope with.

He would not have permitted the Civil Service to become the Frankenstein which it has become. "Appoint that man Colonel of the regiment regardless of whether he knows the color of Caesar's hair."—is so

eloquent a commentary as to what he would have done with the entire breed of the reformers of our service—who have reformed and improved it to such a point that they have driven out of political life every upstanding and unbendable mind, so many of whom we met in office in Lincoln's day. He would not have tolerated in our service the introduction of the principle based upon the legend of the visitor's bed in Sodom and Gomorrah—a bed of one given size—prepared for the unfortunate guest who would sojourn in those then up-to-date municipalities. The Civil Service cuts off his legs if he is too long or stretches his limbs if he is too short. He must fit in this Civil Service bed of Sodom and Gomorrah; for the Civil Service man has measured the bed and the berth and there is the end. Lincoln would never have subscribed to such a theory. "See and speak to this man."—read many of his comments on petitions for all manner of requests to the government. Nowadays we don't see and we don't speak to anyone—the examination paper as marked and appraised by an omniscient examiner in the absence of the victim, is decisive and final and unappealable.

Foreign debts? Did we pay our debts of 1776 to France and to the others? Bring forth the records—Lincoln never would have heeded such much prayed for international disavowal of debts; Lincoln himself paid every dollar of the debts incurred by his drunken partner, although it took him twelve years to do it. Such anxious and premeditated voluntary bankruptcies of debtors for loans which were borrowed in the name of liberty and for the purpose of achieving freedom from the oppressor and which were promised to be repaid with great solemnity by these countries with interest and with gratitude. So-called gratitude we get, but neither principle nor interest seems to be forthcoming from any of them, excepting from England. But all of them are even now trying to bring us into their League in order not only not to pay what is due to us, but use us as the general messenger and the general utility man, as their overwhelming majority therein might direct.

We can sum up Lincoln's attitude on all these questions by a single quotation—a complete philosophy of life—his chief concern in life:

"A struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men, to lift artificial weights from all shoulders, to clear the paths of laudable pursuits for all, to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life."

And to those who are discontent with limiting the sphere of action of our great Emancipator and are bound to make him a citizen of the world, I have but to say that his resplendent example alone will suffice for those other nations of the world who would have some of his glory

and who would have a share in his great heritage which he left to all the children of men and as of the great Jewish lawgiver of old, we can say of him:

" . . . he is more than ours as we are more
Than yet the world dares dream. His stature grows
With that illimitable state
Whose sovereignty ordains no tribute shore,
And borderland of hate,
But grounds its justice in the joy it sows.
His spirit is still a power to emancipate
Bondage—more base, being more insidious,
Than serfdom—that cries out in the midst of us
For virtue, born of opportunity,
And manhood, weighed in honest human worth,
And freedom, best in labor. He stands forth
'Mongst nations old—a new-world Abraham,
The patriarch of peoples still to be . . ."

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THE MANY-SIDED LINCOLN

What Would He Do Were He Here Today?

By

EMANUEL HERTZ

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT WASHINGTON HEIGHTS CONGREGATION
FEBRUARY 12, 1926

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THE MANY-SIDED LINCOLN — WHAT WOULD HE DO WERE HE HERE TODAY?

By EMANUEL HERTZ

(An address delivered in honor of the memory of Abraham Lincoln at the Annual Services of the Forum of Washington Heights Congregation in the City of New York on February 12, 1926.)

THE whimsical caricaturist who draws an array of studies of possible portraits of Abraham Lincoln by Murillo, Van Dyke, Velasquez, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Hals, Whistler, Millet and Rembrandt, each one after the manner of his age and after the mode then prevalent in his country—if these masters had indeed painted Lincoln—has but exemplified what is happening to the great War President at the hands of novelist-historians, and biographer-poets. They summon up before our gaze an Abraham Lincoln who never lived and who, had he read some of these effusions, would have been puzzled as to who was really the subject of these biographical phantasmagorias. On the theory of producing something new, we have these later-day biographers rhapsodize about Lincoln's extremely prosaic childhood and reenact an Iliad of woe through which he forged his weary way, and this array of authors has drawn out the history of his family for seven generations with a meticulous minuteness rarely lavished upon the scion of an imperial family—while Lincoln himself spoke of his family's life story as "The short and simple annals of the poor." But the spirit of piling Ossa on Pelion will not down and by sheer force of volume of research Lincoln is forced into a heraldic Almanac de Gotha of his own. But this wise man of the Civil War era has left an effective antidote to all such futile effort—to make him appear other than he really was. He wrote and he spoke his philosophy of life, his ideals and theory of government, his ideas of right and wrong, his views of the duty of the citizen to his country, and the relationships of man to man, of employer to employee, of commander to common soldier, of President to his Cabinet, to his Congress, to his War Governors, he wrote these thoughts and reflections and duties and rights into his addresses, into his messages and into his lectures and into his letters. Examine an index to his collected works—to those which have appeared in print, and you will see lucid expressions of opinion on a multiplicity of subjects. Read the speech or the letter or the message covering any particular subject, and you will find a gem—a nugget of pure gold direct from the heart of

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Abraham Lincoln. And but for the lamentable lack of study of those precious works, we have seen grow up in the minds of many, a cadaverous-looking charcoal sketch of the great American—with one or two fables or events tacked on to the caricature of what was as noble an apparition when seen in all its remarkable manifestations as is the impression made upon our minds by the undimmed splendors of the rising sun. Close upon those romancers who persist in having the babbling brook, the song of the birds, the whistling of the wind, the glimmer of moonlight on the waves of the rivulet as indispensable parts of the landscape traversed by the youthful Lincoln, are those who profess to find that he has excelled in one, and in only one field of endeavor. These now profess and proceed to demonstrate that this or that particular specialty in which Lincoln excelled, enabled him in after life to solve the problems which he was called upon to cope with. The ignorance and arrogance of this class of biographers and romancers has actually diverted the gaze of the multitude from the real character of Lincoln. The reverend homage paid to the printed word simply because it is printed, simply helps along these multitudes of inventions. Every season brings its five-foot bookshelf of Lincoln books and addresses, and they all look distressingly alike in workmanship.

Why not, in justice to him and all those who ought to know him as he was, go back to the source, the only source of all our reliable information? Why not call upon all who know or have a letter or document which would shed any light on Lincoln, to produce and publish it? Let us study Abraham Lincoln as he was. Let us hold him up to our children in his real habiliments of body and of mind? Let us start with the young Lincoln in the Illinois Assembly; let us follow him through five years of legislative life at his desk in the legislature—*the desk which is even now looking for a permanent resting place.* Let us read the letters, the speeches and the Lyceum addresses of that period. Let us follow him as he studied law from the moment he found a copy of Blackstone at the bottom of the old barrel. Let us follow him as he practiced law for many years and come to know Lincoln the lawyer. Oh, what a wonderful tale—truthful to the letter, can be told about this young champion of deserving causes—this champion of the widow and guardian angel of the orphan—this great and good man who strove for justice, with truth—truth, the seal of God—as his lodestone. He would right a wrong, he would struggle for an unfortunate client—always provided that he was convinced of his honesty and of the justice of his cause. He could not last as the advocate of evil. He withdrew and cleansed himself of the contact with evil. He became the jury lawyer of his day in the State of Illinois. And yet no man ever lived who would have made a better Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. President Taft—who picked and appointed more Judges than any other

President save only Washington—is authority for this claim, and Senator Beveridge in his immortal life of the great Chief Justice pictures Lincoln as an almost indistinguishable colleague and companion of one for the other. But all of this does not demonstrate that Lincoln was a great lawyer only—a lawyer to the exclusion of all else. It was one of the many occupations thrust upon him by a Divine Providence, preparing him for the greater tasks, for the more exacting ordeals, yet to come. We find another student of the great Commoner studying Lincoln's political activities from his appearance on the platform during his first candidacy for office down to his re-election for the Presidency in 1864. He will examine the newspapers of a quarter of a century in a score of States in order to demonstrate that it was not Lincoln the lawyer, but Lincoln the political leader or statesman who really made the great impression on his times.

An old veteran of the Civil War attempts to demonstrate that the great joint debate was really the climax of his career and he digests the opinions of his contemporaries and of contemporary journals to show that his thesis is the only one that fits the great debater, the great tribune of the common people.

There are others who were slow to recognize his great worth and who began to see him and know him under the great storm and stress of the Civil War—in that beleagured city—Washington. His dealings with a refractory Congress, his troubles with Northern States, loyal, but slow in responding to the call of the Union. His countering the assaults of the disloyal in his own ranks, his warding off blows for misguided friends, his course of education of an entire country—that the Union must be preserved—presented an entirely new theory to the historian of the Civil War. He discovered a figure towering over and above all others around him—a sublime figure under every phase of the cataclysm—a figure heroic, sublime, majestic, holding to the steering wheel of the Union and steering for safety, to victory. This man is reaching the conclusion Seward reached—"We must revise our opinion of this man." We knew him not. We have a great War President—uncanny in his knowledge and ability to cope with so many distracting problems at the same time—there is something superhuman about it all. Stanton, the imperious, is subdued; Seward, the all-wise is awed; Wells, the faithful is beginning to see a great light. Senators, congressmen, governors, generals unwilling but inevitably, are drawn by the giant magnet of common sense, of thoroughness of human sympathy—all are drawn on for help, for guidance, for information, for re-heartening, for strength, for faith in the ultimate victory of the Union under its great pilot. Hence the evolution of Lincoln, the statesman, the great War President, the master of men. (What a misnomer to be applied to that humble burden bearer.)

The leaders of religion are now turning their gaze upon the lonely spokesman of the Union—who speaks in the language of the Prophets, who seems to have sprung from between the pages of the Bible—for does he not use Bible phrases, parables, nuggets of wisdom like the Lawgiver of old? Did he not see the Union on fire but not destroyed—the bush burning but not destroyed by the fire? Did he not hear the call from amid the flames of the embers which made up the toppling Union—"Go and save the Union?" And did he not answer joyfully, anxiously: "Here am I?" Preacher and teacher, priest and religious leader recognize a kinship between his President and his Prophets and his saints and his martyrs, those who made up the list of those who strove to make man free and independent and enlightened. They begin to recognize a kinship to Abraham, to Moses, to Paul, to Savonarola (what a striking likeness of emaciated profile), to Wyclif, to Cromwell, to Calvin, to William the Silent, whose taking off the little children bewailed as did an entire grief-stricken country bewail the untimely death of his modern replica; and when he was consigned as belonging to the ages—every teacher and preacher of God's Word paid his share in a universal requiem rendered to the martyred hero of the epic called America.

The stylist and scholar, the student of language who is freer from charlatanism than most people, begins to study the text. He reads Lincoln's addresses, his messages and his letters. He asks himself where did this man derive his pure English style? How is it that he is so free from the baneful style of political speaker and writer? How brief, how simple, how pure, how clear his thought and his style and his mode of expression? He now tries to find a prototype and he goes far back to ancient Greece and finds in Pericles the only man to whose oration he can compare this novel style and Aesop, the only one whose tales resemble Honest Abe's. Few spirits have spoken thus—two or three in all the intervening ages. This man is a great exemplar of English prose style; but hold, some of it reads like blank verse. What a wonderful man is this who in the short space of time mastered the English language within which to clothe these undying ideas and ideals. The literary critic now reads his letters and begins to understand why the newspapermen of his day —and there were giants in that profession in those days, demanded letters from Lincoln on all the many questions and problems of the day—because all read them, all quoted them. He hardly opened his lips but he said something which will not die. Was there ever such another letter-writer? Letters in which sentiments ran the gamut of all the emotions of a bleeding, embattled nation struggling through the darkness to light, through rebellion and treason to victory and union. The Epistles of Lincoln—what an alluring title to some new novelist-historian of a great national hero and martyr!

And now come the mothers, the heartbroken mothers, the grief-stricken mothers, the tear-blinded mothers, the pale, emaciated, half-crazed mothers, they came to Lincoln, to Mr. Lincoln, to the President—tired, sleepless, exhausted, red-lidded, hollow cheeked, the burden-bearer of humanity, literally dropping under his great burden, and faces these mothers, and hears their heartbreaking appeals of impending executions of their boys—the victims of army discipline through the ages—and Father Abraham, but lately bereft of his own child—melts in sympathy as he hears these heartbroken mothers of the Union plead for their offspring, and he pardons and he pardons and he pardons until we behold in him the Angel of Mercy at the throne of the Most High pleading for pardon for all. He pardons, while the generals threaten to resign, while Stanton growls over the undermined morale of the army and over shattered discipline. "Stanton, is not this boy of more use to the Union on earth than under earth?"—and so we behold the sublime outline of Lincoln, the Pardoner—eclipsing that of the lawyer, of the politician, of the debater, of the legislator, of the statesman, of the executive, of the stylist, of the letterwriter, and for a moment we behold in juxtaposition the two great solemn pictures—Lincoln the Comforter of the mother of the pardoned boy, and Napoleon standing rigid over the sleeping sentinel who awakes and beholds his emperor on guard—and his irrevocable doom pictured in the inexorable features of his emperor! Choose the picture which appeals more to the universal human heart.

And so, step by step, we find the pardoner of the young soldier become the pardoner of the entire South—a friend of Jefferson Davis, and of Lee, and of Stephens, whenever they are ready to utter the word—"Union". And then his task is done—the task for which he lingered an entire lifetime—the task for which he prepared in the country store, in the post office, in the legislature, in the surveyor's office, in the courts, on the hustings, in Congress, in the debate with Douglas, in Cooper Union—the task of grasping the wheel of the Ship of State surrounded by rocks, by wreckers, by lightning—steering clear through the Scylla of secession and the Charybdis of disloyalty in the North—this task done—completely done, and he was no more, for like Enoch, God took him. This many-sided messenger of God sent to right the wrongs of a race—held in subjugation, in defiance of all that was right and of all that was just—indefiance of a higher law that was becoming dominant in the land, although it required a repetition of the ancient plague—that all the first-born of the oppressors would have to be slain before the children of bondage would be let go.

Let us all repair to the great quarry, his recorded words, his preachments, his maxims, and let us complete the great structure, let us gather from all the corners of the globe his written words and complete the

task so well begun. Let us classify all he said and all he preached—and what will result? We will erect a structure to which all the people of the earth can come for guidance and inspiration. Would a political leader seek light and leading let him study the political utterances of our many-sided Lincoln. Would an executive not merely ask himself perfunctorily, "What would Lincoln do today?" let him read and have his answer. Would you have patent for loyalty and patriotism let him read Lincoln who declared that he would be the last man to defy the enemies of his country when all others had given up. Would you desire to find a method of exposing a false prophet of a wicked cause—study his joint debate with Douglas. Would you know how to immortalize those who gave up their lives that the Union might live, go with me to Gettysburg—and in solemn silence meditate what he there spoke for eternity. Would you know how to cleanse the Augean stables of a putrid and treasonable administration—see what he did when he displaced the infirm and petulant Buchanan, on the point of surrendering all to the enemies of his country. Would you learn how to manage an administration open to assault from without and from within with those closest to you trying to embroil you in universal war—see what Lincoln did from the moment he came to Washington through the long and weary years of the nerve-wrecking and heart-breaking war.

Lincoln, the Diplomat! How they would have smiled had someone called him that ten years earlier—divined what the rascally Napoleon was doing with the agents of the Confederacy—Lincoln, the diplomat solved and disposed of the Trent Affair and confounded the conspiracy of Gladstone, Palmerston and Russell to recognize the Confederacy by timing the issuing of his Emancipation Proclamation, not to please Wendell Phillips or Beecher or Greeley, but in time to prevent action by an English Cabinet called for the purpose of recognizing the Confederacy—he made it clear that taking such action would place Christian England in the position of the advocate and champion of the whipping post, of the auction block and of the Moloch of slavery. Diplomat, indeed, was Lincoln, who picked Dayton for Paris and Sanford at Brussels, who gathered all the munitions available on the Continent and Adams for England in time to tell his lordship that releasing the Alabama was war! And on the 117th Anniversary of his birth, Sir Frederick Maurice, one who judged the military events of the Great War with knowledge and keen discernment, finds a great military authority in our great War President who learned the great lesson of War and of warfare in an amazingly short time and from a military standpoint he knew more and understood more than all his civil and military advisors, one who followed understandingly every great battle from Chancellorsville and Antietam through Gettysburg and Vicksburg, down to Appomattox. Lincoln knew the war map better than his generals and had his

advice been followed on a number of occasions, the war would have been shortened by years.

But in no capacity does he appear to greater advantage than he does in the White House—the mecca for every human being, either singly or in droves, seeking advice, having a request, an idea, a petition, or a message. What a motley number they were—foreign ministers, war correspondents, governors, Southern sympathizers, generals, soldiers, preachers, teachers, journalists, financiers, the entire army personnel, cabinet officers, senators, political leaders—all came early and often to advise, cajole, petition, harass and annoy the man of many sorrows, the man of many pardons, who was trying in spite of them all, to do the work he was called upon to perform. All of these came and saw and heard for themselves what this many-sided man said and did and accomplished. A great many of these have in one form or another recorded their impressions of the man, recorded their recollections of how he acquitted himself under the most trying ordeals and all seem to agree that this was no ordinary man. This man, who saw all, who heard all, who endured slander and abuse such as has never been levelled against any one human being—and finally convinced even those of their iniquity —this man who was never found wanting, who was never unprepared— this was indeed no ordinary man.

And we, the heirs of this great soul, we should dedicate ourselves to the task of rescuing Abraham Lincoln from the hands of his detractors. We, the citizens of the land he died to preserve, owe it to his memory to gather lovingly all the shreds and all the words, all the sayings and all the precepts that fell from his lips wherever recorded and preserved and demand in the name of justice, in the name of fairness, that all the documents, letters, legal papers, inscriptions, passes, comments and speeches in existence anywhere, everywhere, be produced for publication to the end that we might reproduce the dead leader to our people in all his many-sided endowments with all the multitude of kindnesses, of virtues he displayed, as engraved in the missives which came from his heart to every other wounded heart, to every sorrowing mother, to every war-weary patriot—who asked for and received the treasured words of consolation written in that beautiful script by the hand that was guided by the great immortal soul in the White House.

And now what would this many-sided Lincoln have done with the problems of the day? is a question which every now and then one of our Lincoln Day orators, one of our statesmen in responsible positions asks. An answer to that question has been attempted a great many times but very few answers have been given in the light of Lincoln's performances. The sad and distressing phase about the whole thing seems to be that

all those who ask the question, not unlike his biographers, studiously refrain from reading Lincoln's speeches and letters. They refrain from studying his political acts and performances. In the light of these we can truthfully state that Lincoln certainly would not divide his followers into patricians and plebeians. Lincoln certainly would not have divided the voters of this country into a fighting organization and into an office-holding organization. The man who would fight the battles of the Republic; the man who would preach Lincoln's doctrine would not be disqualified by his preachment from carrying out Lincoln's policies in office.

A political leader with Abraham Lincoln was a man to be considered and consulted—Read the letters to Thurlow Weed, to Senator Cameron, to Lyman Trumbull, to Hannibal Hamlin and to a host of others. And it goes without saying that the political party today which practices that sane and practical political principle of Abraham Lincoln's, of having the preachers of political policy become the performers in office, that party succeeds and continues to succeed; but the party which has one portion do the work of electing and then is made to make way for people unheard of until after election, and who by some necromancy convince or bedevil the appointing power that they, and not the workers, should fill the offices; the party which practices this false political principle fails at succeeding elections and continues to go down to defeat until it ceases to be a factor; for it does not deserve to live.

And when the political leader nowadays asks: "What would Lincoln do if he were here today?" we can tell him that Lincoln would do just that—reward the deserving political worker with political preferment after he had participated and made possible the victory of the party.

Different panaceas for eliminating corruption in high places received but scant consideration from that direct political descendant of old Samuel Adams who said: "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." And if Lincoln could busy himself with politics every day of the year he could see no reason why others should not do the same thing. Lincoln believed in a trained political party—lieutenants who would not only appreciate the principles the party stood for, but who were trained and prepared to carry out those party principles in such a manner as would result in strengthening the Union. Political volunteers to him were as good and as bad as volunteers in the army who came for thirty or sixty days and whose one thought during their period of volunteering was the anxiety to return home. It was only after the army was drilled and trained and made permanent that victories were made possible.

And if Lincoln were here today he would preach and practice that only trained political leaders are worth anything in our body politic and that the volunteers of a week or ten days before election, for the purpose

of filling the office, if successful, would make no impression upon that master politician today any more than they would have in his own time.

The questioner as to what Lincoln would do on different occasions might well be answered by referring him to what Lincoln said and did. His tariff policy was clear and made clear by the tersest and clearest statement—which once more shows the cloudless lucidity of his mind. What would Lincoln have done about National Defence and National participation in international affairs? The answer to the first question when tested by his actual words and deeds can be found in the fact that he organized the greatest army and navy any country ever had up to his day. And the other question, which so many have attempted to answer for him, can easily be answered by anyone who knows what a firm believer Lincoln was in the Declaration of Independence, in the policies of Washington and Jefferson and Marshall as to the duties and as to the functions of our country among the nations of the world; and it is little less than sacrilege for anyone to say that Lincoln would have advocated entry of our country into the League of Nations and thus become subordinated and lost in the Babel of voices and vortex of selfish passions which dominate and rule that incongruous institution. Lincoln knew well what the Christian statesmen of England were attempting to do with the help of the diplomats of France and the other countries on the Continent. Gladstone and Palmerston and Russell and the vast majority of the English and French intelligencia were ready to gloat over the destruction of the Union, and came within a hair's breadth of realizing their ardent hopes and ambitions. For anyone to say that Father Abraham would have consented to have his country, his United States, have one voice among fifty-two others, one voice against fifty-two others in a league which is represented by an overwhelming majority of peoples—primitive, selfish, under-educated and unprincipled and unscrupulous in their diplomacy—for any man to imagine that Abraham Lincoln would have ever exposed the country for which he fought and died to the ipse dixit of an institution of this kind, sprung into being in the last moments of the expiring Versailles Conference which met in a spirit of revenge, which acted in the spirit of a conqueror over the vanquished, which tried to extract from a conquered foe the penalties of wars and of differences of centuries, has not read and has not understood the words of Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln, with his immeasurable sympathy, never believed in the principle of voi victis—woe to the conquered—and it was from that atmosphere that the League of Nations sprang. That alone would have made it impossible for a man of the mighty toleration, of the great love, of the great heart of Abraham Lincoln, to participate in any such conference or become a member of the offspring of such a conference.

To anyone who has read his letters and his addresses on reconstruction of the conquered South, to anyone who knows that he had nothing but the hand of fellowship for Lee, for Jefferson Davis, for Benjamin and for Johnson, if they but subscribed to the oath of fealty, it is unthinkable to believe that Lincoln would have become a partner in the bloody military cabals of the Balkan States and their European co-conspirators among the greater powers who control them.

If Lincoln were alive today and in a position of power, he would prevent the contamination of the United States by union with people who thrive on war, who believe in war, who prepare for war, who pray for war and whose business is war. "Let us beware of military glory," said Lincoln. "It is a rainbow made of drops of blood. Like the fascination of the serpent, it charms only to destroy." He would not have permitted the Union of his country with people who do not believe in religious toleration and in the equality of man, Lincoln, this bewilderingly original genius, had a peculiar method of minding his own affairs and of having the United States mind its own affairs; he would have actually advocated the principle of educating America first and enlightening America first, of saving America first, and of making the people of America respected by being tolerant to the stranger in their midst, before he would move to participate in the business of any other country or any other nation. He would have been adamant on the question of the Monroe Doctrine and would not have thrown it into the ever-boiling cauldron of European politics. This statesman of the masses would have been a mighty helper in the struggle between capital and labor; he would have been a tower of strength for the oppressed of every nationality. He would have laughed out of existence secret organizations as inimical to our form of government, and would have led them all into the temple of the Union where all are equal, where all have equal opportunity, and he would have pointed to himself as he often did when he said: "I happen temporarily to occupy the White House. I am a living witness that any one of your children may look to come here as my father's child has."—and it might have been his life's work had he been spared from the bullet of the assassin to give every child of this broad land just that opportunity. He would not have made a mockery of the majesty of the law by enforcing one law and neglecting others. He would have continued to act with malice towards none and charity to all. Justice, justice shalt thou pursue —would have been Lincoln's policy. Not one-sided justice—not justice directed at one single commandment—enforce all the laws impartially and do not prefer one to the other—for you would then be partial to one class of criminal, more lenient with one than with the other—a policy which ultimately leads to injustice. Practice justice for the sake of justice, and not because of popular acclaim—"Let us have faith that right makes might and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it."

If Lincoln were here today he would not require the consent of an ecumenical conference to give him permission to criticize an unfair law, or a law unfairly enacted. He did not hesitate to criticize the Dred Scott decision in the most rigorous way—he went further; he charged an understanding between the dramatic personae, in no unmistakable manner—see how he flays Taney and Douglas, Pierce and Buchanan. "We cannot absolutely know that these exact adaptations are the result of pre-concert, but when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places, and by different workmen—Stephen, Franklin, Roger and James, for instance; and when we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortices exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places, and not a piece too many or too few,—not omitting even the scaffolding—or if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared to yet bring such pieces in—in such a case we feel it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin, and Roger and James, all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn before the first blow was struck." If for no other reason, his presence in these days would have been a dispensation, for he would have demonstrated the fallacy which has become a great shibboleth of good citizenship—that a bad law, known to be bad, must be enforced ad nauseam in order to educate a community for its repeal. He did not belong to the class who said: "My country, right or wrong—nevertheless my country." He said: "My country must ever be right, and when wrong must acknowledge that it is wrong and must be set right."—as he did with the Trent Affair, when the entire North fairly howled approval of the Captain's conduct when he seized the Southern commissioners. We cannot imagine Lincoln standing by and knowing that an idea or an enactment or a bill or a law was wrong—and stand idly by and be cowed into worshipping that law. And yet no human being ever breathed who had a greater respect for law. We all know his stand on immigration, how he had not the heart to do aught which would prevent anyone, who fled from persecution or who came here to better his lot, from coming here. He knew nothing of Nordic or South European—all he knew was that one God made us all. Now, some of us have discovered what he said, and how farseeing his immigration policy was may be seen from the united North which fought the Civil War and then the Great War in our own day—the roar of cannon knows no distinction between Hollander, English, French or German descendants of our early immigrants! Some of us still recall the inspired war cartoon showing the fusion of all nationalities in the defense of our country—the young men with those unpronounceable names who fought

so nobly and so well. Would he look with favor upon an alien registration law? He certainly would not; he would write another letter to Speed, which would read as follows:

". . . Our progress in degeneracy appears to be pretty rapid. As a Nation we began by declaring that 'All men are created free and equal.' We now practically read it: 'All men are created equal, except negroes.' When Know-nothings get control—'All men are created equal except negroes, foreigners and Catholics!' When it comes to this, I shall prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretence of loving liberty—to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without even the base alloy of hypocrisy."

He would have stamped out religious persecution in every shape as he stamped out sedition and secession. He pleaded for peaceful solution of the overwhelming problem which confronted him—and Lincoln's difficulties at that time have never been adequately portrayed—and when that failed, and when the blind Southern leaders, bent on secession, became the aggressors, he firmly and unflaggingly saw the War to a successful end. Nor was he diverted from his purpose by other entanglements. "One war at a time," was his slogan; but he was prepared for the next problem the moment the War was over. He would have ended the cowardly attack of sects levelled against their neighbors simply because of religious differences or because of the differences in time of their arrival on these shores. He would have spoken directly and clearly as he did when he delivered his "House divided" speech in spite of the advice of his entire party of advisors and managers who wailed that defeat was certain should he utter those fatal words—which he did utter —and which were heard by an aroused people from coast to coast. His living words about our attitude towards negroes and Catholics just quoted are ample proof of this claim as to what he would have done were he in office today on the underlying problem of toleration.

He would have been for arbitration, universal in its application; not arbitration with loaded dice; arbitration such as would insure not only all people of the earth an honest verdict, but which would protect the United States from envious and rapacious claims and plots and schemes of the war-impoverished peoples of the world, whose sole aim in life seems to be the unloading of all the troubles of the world upon our heads. He would have seen that; he would have understood that; and he, with his amazing personality would have accomplished what seems to be so hard for us to understand and cope with.

He would not have permitted the Civil Service to become the Frankenstein which it has become. "Appoint that man Colonel of the regiment regardless of whether he knows the color of Caesar's hair."—is so

eloquent a commentary as to what he would have done with the entire breed of the reformers of our service—who have reformed and improved it to such a point that they have driven out of political life every upstanding and unbendable mind, so many of whom we met in office in Lincoln's day. He would not have tolerated in our service the introduction of the principle based upon the legend of the visitor's bed in Sodom and Gomorrah—a bed of one given size—prepared for the unfortunate guest who would sojourn in those then up-to-date municipalities. The Civil Service cuts off his legs if he is too long or stretches his limbs if he is too short. He must fit in this Civil Service bed of Sodom and Gomorrah; for the Civil Service man has measured the bed and the berth and there is the end. Lincoln would never have subscribed to such a theory. "See and speak to this man."—read many of his comments on petitions for all manner of requests to the government. Nowadays we don't see and we don't speak to anyone—the examination paper as marked and appraised by an omniscient examiner in the absence of the victim, is decisive and final and unappealable.

Foreign debts? Did we pay our debts of 1776 to France and to the others? Bring forth the records—Lincoln never would have heeded such much prayed for international disavowal of debts; Lincoln himself paid every dollar of the debts incurred by his drunken partner, although it took him twelve years to do it. Such anxious and premeditated voluntary bankruptcies of debtors for loans which were borrowed in the name of liberty and for the purpose of achieving freedom from the oppressor and which were promised to be repaid with great solemnity by these countries with interest and with gratitude. So-called gratitude we get, but neither principle nor interest seems to be forthcoming from any of them, excepting from England. But all of them are even now trying to bring us into their League in order not only not to pay what is due to us, but use us as the general messenger and the general utility man, as their overwhelming majority therein might direct.

We can sum up Lincoln's attitude on all these questions by a single quotation—a complete philosophy of life—his chief concern in life:

"A struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men, to lift artificial weights from all shoulders, to clear the paths of laudable pursuits for all, to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life."

And to those who are discontent with limiting the sphere of action of our great Emancipator and are bound to make him a citizen of the world, I have but to say that his resplendent example alone will suffice for those other nations of the world who would have some of his glory

and who would have a share in his great heritage which he left to all the children of men and as of the great Jewish lawgiver of old, we can say of him:

" . . . he is more than ours as we are more
Than yet the world dares dream. His stature grows
With that illimitable state
Whose sovereignty ordains no tribute shore,
And borderland of hate,
But grounds its justice in the joy it sows.
His spirit is still a power to emancipate
Bondage—more base, being more insidious,
Than serfdom—that cries out in the midst of us
For virtue, born of opportunity,
And manhood, weighed in honest human worth,
And freedom, best in labor. He stands forth
'Mongst nations old—a new-world Abraham,
The patriarch of peoples still to be . . ."

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